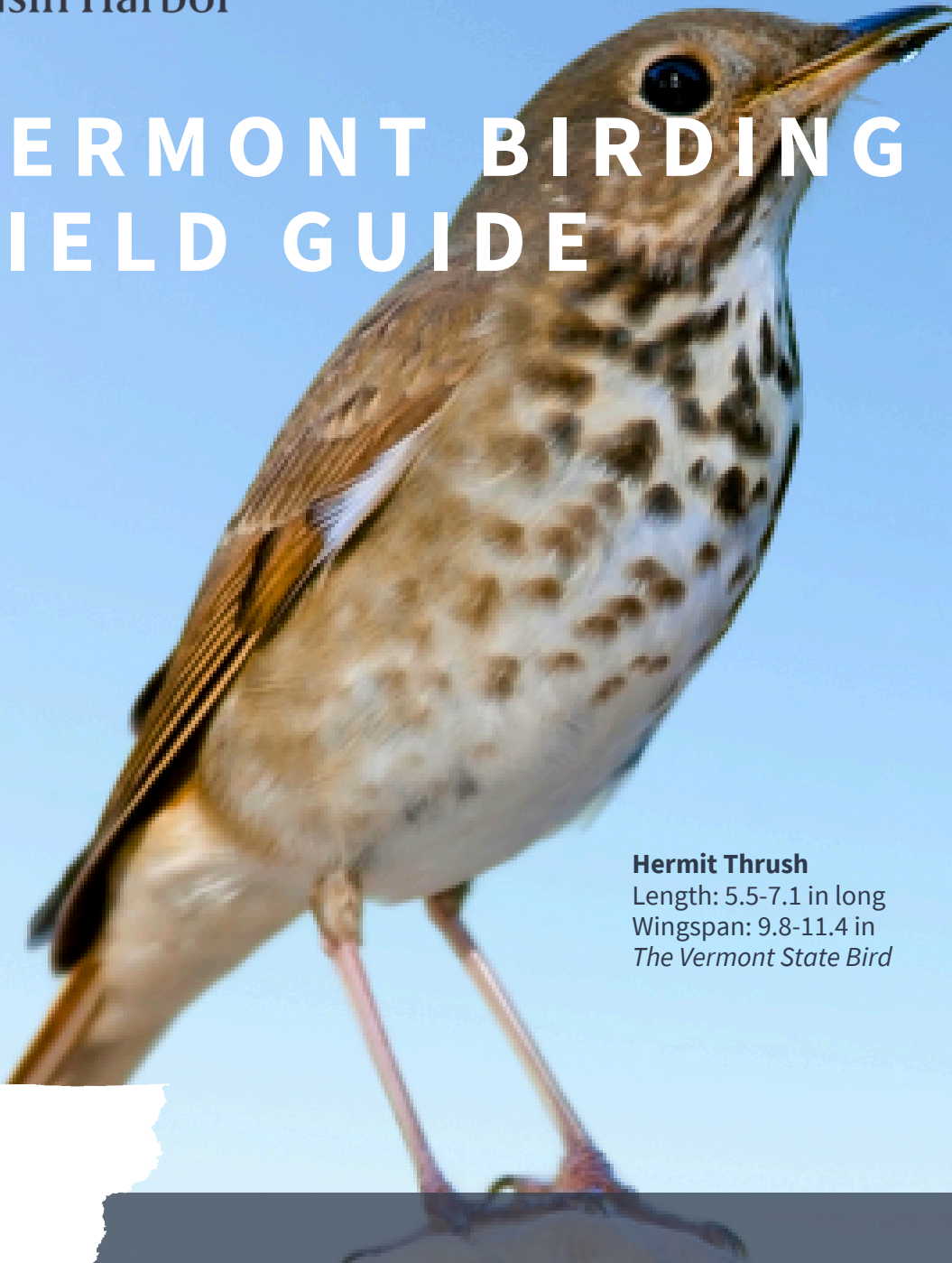




Basin Harbor

# VERMONT BIRDING FIELD GUIDE



## **Hermit Thrush**

Length: 5.5-7.1 in long

Wingspan: 9.8-11.4 in

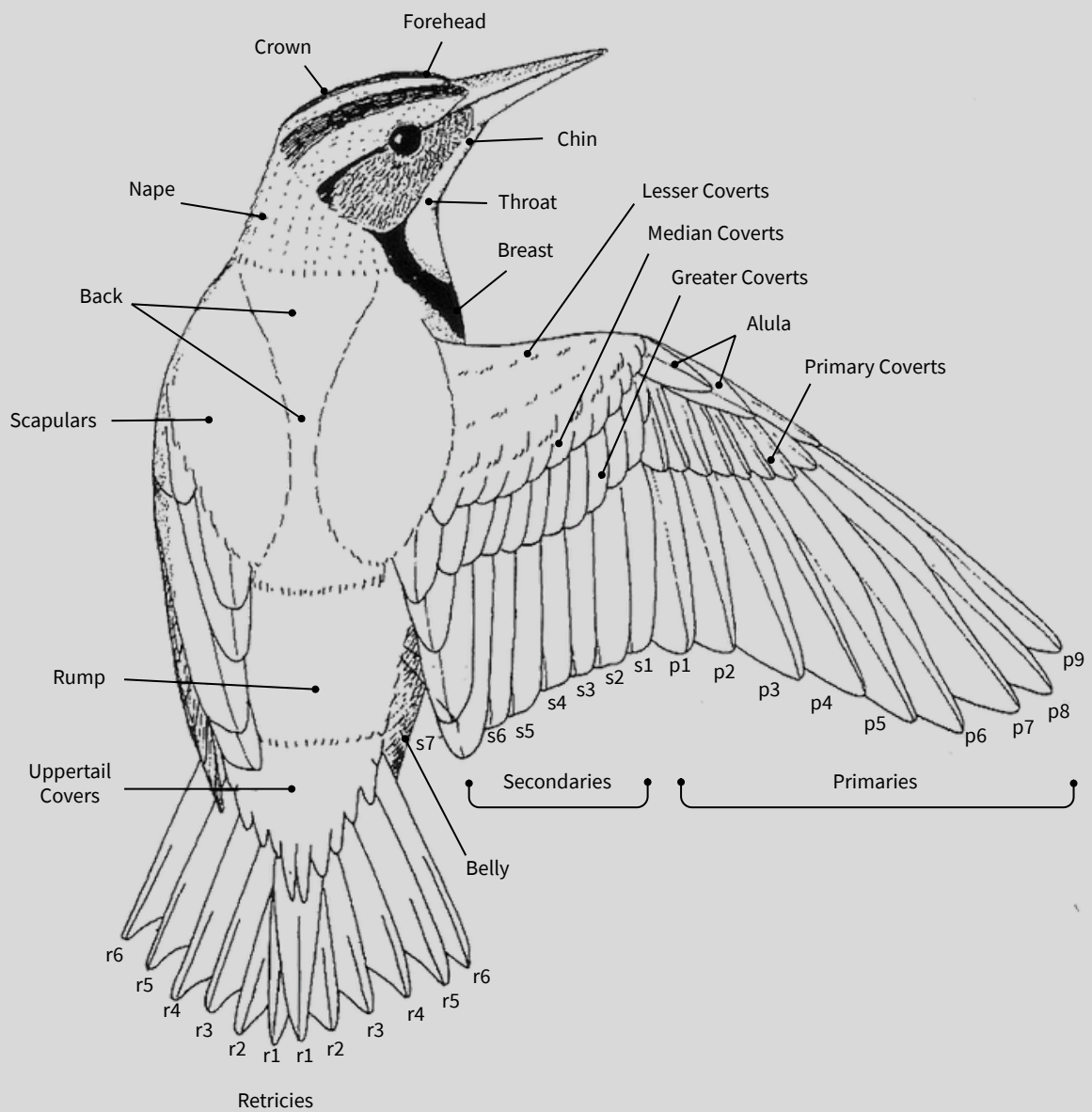
*The Vermont State Bird*



A birding field guide for Vermont is an essential resource for birdwatchers exploring the state's diverse habitats. With a wide variety of bird species found in Vermont, from the common chickadees and woodpeckers to rare migratory visitors, this guide will help identify the birds you come across while staying here at Basin Harbor!

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# Color Patterns

## Mallard

Male Mallards have a dark, iridescent-green head and bright yellow bill. The gray body is sandwiched between a brown breast and black rear. Females and juveniles are mottled brown with orange-and-brown bills. Both sexes have a white-bordered, blue “speculum” patch in the wing.

## Common Loon

In summer, adults have a black head and bill, a black-and-white spotted back, and a white breast. From September to March, adults are plain gray on the back and head with a white throat. The bill also fades to gray. Juveniles look similar, but with more pronounced scalloping on the back.

## Virginia Rail

Rusty overall with a gray face, coarse dark streaking down the back, black-and-white barring on the sides, and white undertail feathers. The bill and legs are reddish, although the legs are often covered with mud.

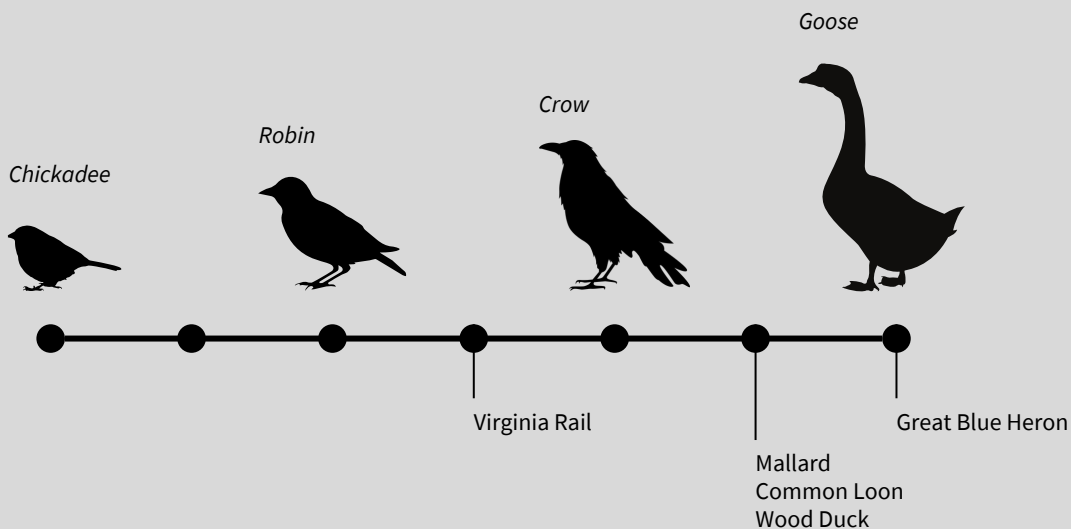
## Great Blue Heron

Appear blue-gray from a distance, with a wide black stripe over the eye. In flight, the upper side of the wing is two-toned: pale on the forewing and darker on the flight feathers. A pure white subspecies occurs in coastal southern Florida.

## Wood Duck

In good light, males have a glossy green head cut with white stripes, a chestnut breast and buffy sides. In low or harsh light, they'll look dark overall with paler sides. Females are gray-brown with white-speckled breast. In eclipse plumage (late summer), males lose their pale sides and bold stripes, but retain their bright eye and bill.

# Relative Sizes





# WATERFOWL (ANSERIFORMES)



**Mallard**

Length: 20-26 in long  
Wingspan: 32-39 in



**Common Loon**

Length: 26-36 in long  
Wingspan: 54 in



**Virginia Rail**

Length: 20-27 cm long  
Wingspan: 32-38 cm



**Great Blue Heron**

Length: 36-54 in long  
Wingspan: 66-79 in



**Wood Duck**

Length: 19-21 in long  
Wingspan: 26-29 in

# Color Patterns

## White-Winged Scoter

Adult males are silken black overall with large white patches in the wings (fully visible in flight and often partly visible at rest). They have a comma-shaped white mark around and behind the eye. Black feathers extend onto the bill, and the tip of the bill is orange. Males' feet are bright orange-red.

## Hooded Merganser

Adult male Hooded Mergansers are black above, with a white breast and rich chestnut flanks. The black head has a large white patch that varies in size when the crest is raised or lowered, but is always prominent. Females and immatures are gray and brown, with warm tawny-cinnamon tones on the head.

## Blue-Winged Teal

Breeding males are brown-bodied with dark speckling on the breast, slaty-blue head with a white crescent behind the bill, and a small white flank patch in front of their black rear. In flight, they reveal a bold powder-blue patch on their upperwing coverts.

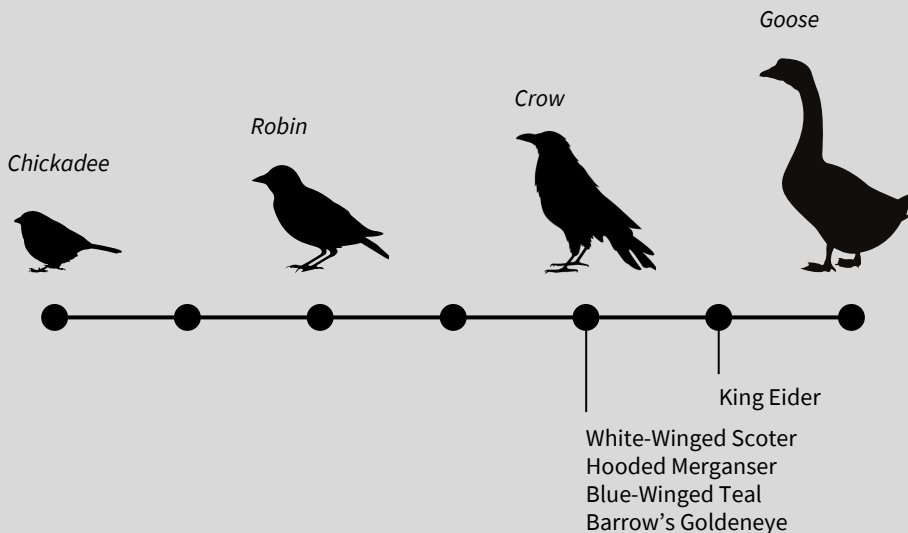
## King Eider

Adult males are pale on the head and neck and mostly black on the body, with a large orange plate above the red bill. The crown is tinged blue-gray and the face is greenish. The back, underwing, flank and upperwing are white. Adult females are rich rusty brown intricately patterned with black.

## Barrow's Goldeneye

Adult males are snow white below, smartly patterned with black and white above. At close range the head has a purple gloss. The eye is bright yellow with a white crescent between the eye and the bill. Females are grayish with a coppery head and a partly or mostly yellow bill.

# Relative Sizes







**White-Winged Scoter**  
Length: 21-24 in long  
Wingspan: 31.5 in



**Blue-Winged Teal**  
Length: 16 in long  
Wingspan: 23 in



**Hooded Merganser**  
Length: 15.8-19.3 in long  
Wingspan: 23.6-26.0 in



**King Eider**  
Length: 20-28 in long  
Wingspan: 34-40 in



**Barrow's Goldeneye**  
Length: 19.2 in long  
Wingspan: 27.6-28.7 in



# Color Patterns

## Bald Eagle

Adult Bald Eagles have white heads and tails with dark brown bodies and wings. Their legs and bills are bright yellow. Immature birds have mostly dark heads and tails; their brown wings and bodies are mottled with white in varying amounts.

## Red-Tailed Hawk

Most Red-tailed Hawks are rich brown above and pale below, with a streaked belly and, on the wing underside, a dark bar between shoulder and wrist. The tail is usually pale below and cinnamon-red above, though in young birds it's brown and banded. "Dark-morph" birds are all chocolate-brown with a warm red tail. "Rufous-morph" birds are reddish-brown on the chest with a dark belly.

## Cooper's Hawk

Adults are steely blue-gray above with warm reddish bars on the underparts and thick dark bands on the tail. Juveniles are brown above and crisply streaked with brown on the upper breast, giving them a somewhat hooded look compared with young Sharp-shinned Hawks' more diffuse streaking.

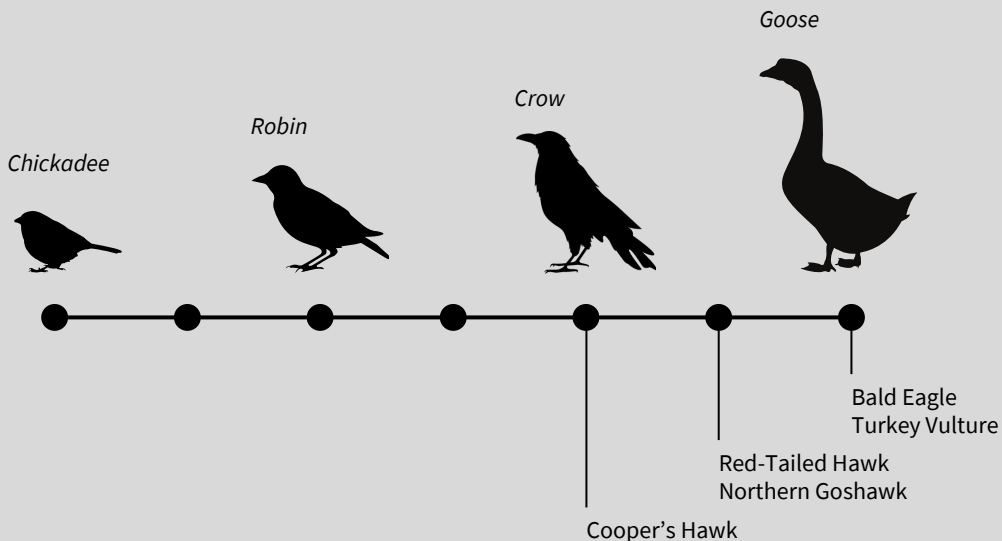
## Turkey Vulture

Turkey Vultures appear black from a distance but up close are dark brown with a featherless red head and pale bill. While most of their body and forewing are dark, the undersides of the flight feathers (along the trailing edge and wingtips) are paler, giving a two-toned appearance.

## Northern Goshawk

Adult goshawks are dark slate gray above with pale gray barred underparts. They have a dark head with a wide white stripe over the eye; the eye is orange to red. Immatures are brown and streaky, with narrow dark bands in the tail. They have an indistinct pale eyebrow stripe and yellow eyes.

# Relative Sizes





# BIRDS OF PREY (ACCIPITRIFORMES)



## **Bald Eagle**

Length: 28-40 in long  
Wingspan: 5'11-7'7 in



## **Cooper's Hawk**

Length: 14-18 in long  
Wingspan: 24-39 in



## **Red-Tailed Hawk**

Length: 18-26 in long  
Wingspan: 3'7-4'8 in



## **Turkey Vulture**

Length: 24-32 in long  
Wingspan: 63-72 in



## **Northern Goshawk**

Length: 20.9-25.2 in long  
Wingspan: 40.5-46.1 in

# Color Patterns

## Northern Harrier

Males are gray above and whitish below with black wingtips, a dark trailing edge to the wing, and a black-banded tail. Females and immatures are brown, with black bands on the tail. Adult females have whitish undersides with brown streaks, whereas immatures are buffy, with less streaking.

## Peregrine Falcon

Adults are blue-gray above with barred underparts and a dark head with thick sideburns. Juveniles are heavily marked, with vertical streaks instead of horizontal bars on the breast. Despite considerable age-related and geographic variation, an overall steely, barred look remains.

## Osprey

Ospreys are brown above and white below, and overall they are whiter than most raptors. From below, the wings are mostly white with a prominent dark patch at the wrists. The head is white with a broad brown stripe through the eye. Juveniles have white spots on the back and buffy shading on the breast.

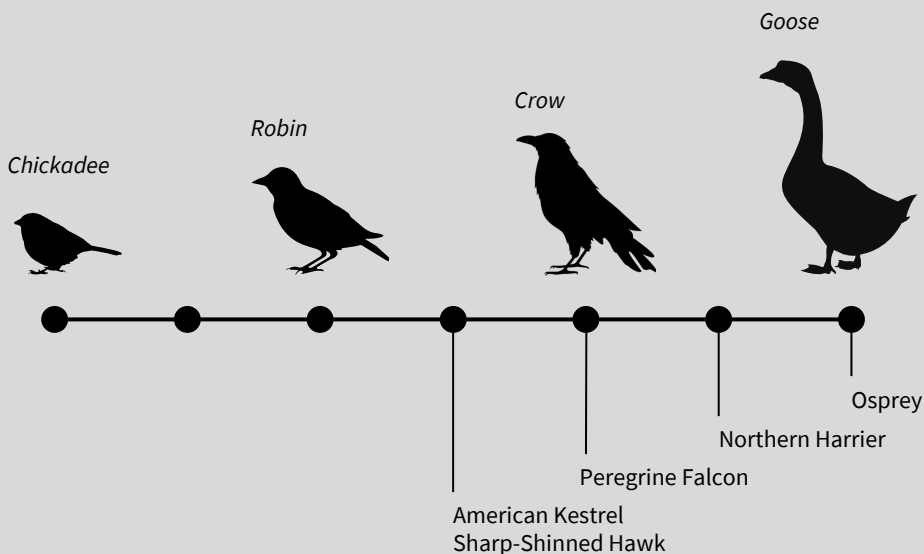
## American Kestrel

American Kestrels are pale when seen from below and warm, rusty brown spotted with black above, with a black band near the tip of the tail. Males have slate-blue wings; females' wings are reddish brown. Both sexes have pairs of black vertical slashes on the sides of their pale faces—sometimes called a “mustache” and a “sideburn.”

## Sharp-Shinned Hawk

Adults are slaty blue-gray above, with narrow, horizontal red-orange bars on the breast. Immature birds are mostly brown, with coarse vertical streaks on white underparts. Adults and young have broad dark bands across their long tails.

# Relative Sizes







**Northern Harrier**  
Length: 16-20 in long  
Wingspan: 38-48 in



**Peregrine Falcon**  
Length: 13-23 in long  
Wingspan: 29-47 in



**Osprey**  
Length: 20-26 in long  
Wingspan: 50-71 in



**Sharp-Shinned Hawk**  
Length: 9.1-11.8 in long  
Wingspan: 17-23 in

**American Kestrel**  
Length: 8.7-12.2 in long  
Wingspan: 20-24 in





# Color Patterns

## Pileated Woodpecker

Pileated Woodpeckers are mostly black with white stripes on the face and neck and a flaming-red crest. Males have a red stripe on the cheek. In flight, the bird reveals extensive white underwings and small white crescents on the upper side, at the bases of the primaries.

## Downy Woodpecker

Downy Woodpeckers give a checkered black-and-white impression. The black upperparts are checked with white on the wings, the head is boldly striped, and the back has a broad white stripe down the center. Males have a small red patch on the back of the head. The outer tail feathers are typically white with a few black spots.

## Red-Bellied Woodpecker

Often appears pale overall, even the boldly black-and-white striped back, with flashing red cap and nape. Look for white patches near the wingtips as this bird flies.

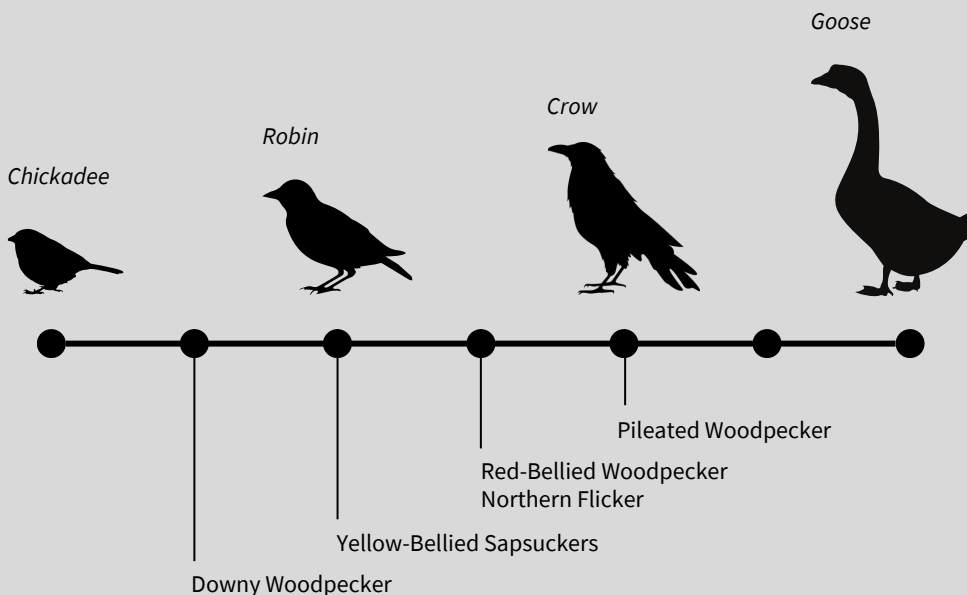
## Northern Flicker

Flickers appear brownish overall with a white rump patch that's conspicuous in flight and often visible when perched. The undersides of the wing and tail feathers are bright yellow, for eastern birds, or red, in western birds. With a closer look you'll see the brown plumage is richly patterned with black spots, bars, and crescents.

## Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker

Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers are mostly black and white with boldly patterned faces. Both sexes have red foreheads, and males also have red throats. Look for a long white stripe along the folded wing. Bold black-and-white stripes curve from the face toward a black chest shield and white or yellowish underparts.

# Relative Sizes



# WOODPECKERS (PICIFORMES)



**Pileated Woodpecker**  
Length: 16-19 in long  
Wingspan: 26-30 in



**Downy Woodpecker**  
Length: 5.5-7.1 in long  
Wingspan: 9.8-12.2 in



**Red-Bellied Woodpecker**  
Length: 9-10.5 in long  
Wingspan: 15-18 in



**Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker**  
Length: 7.5-8.25 in long  
Wingspan: 13.5-15.75 in



**Northern Flicker**  
Length: 11-14 in long  
Wingspan: 16.5-21.5 in



# Color Patterns

## Lewis's Woodpecker

This woodpecker often appears all dark, especially from a distance, but in good light its unique color pattern shows. It has a pink belly, a gray collar, a dark green back, and a dark red face.

## Black-Backed Woodpecker

Inky black above and white below with fine black barring on the flanks. In burned habitats, the white is often smudged gray from soot. The head is almost all black with a single white malar (mustache) stripe and a small white mark behind the eye. Males have a yellow crown patch, lacking in adult females but present in juveniles of both sexes.

## Red-Headed Woodpecker

Adults have bright-red heads, white underparts, and black backs with large white patches in the wings, making the lower back appear all white when perched. Immatures have gray-brown heads, and the white wing patches show rows of black spots near the trailing edge.

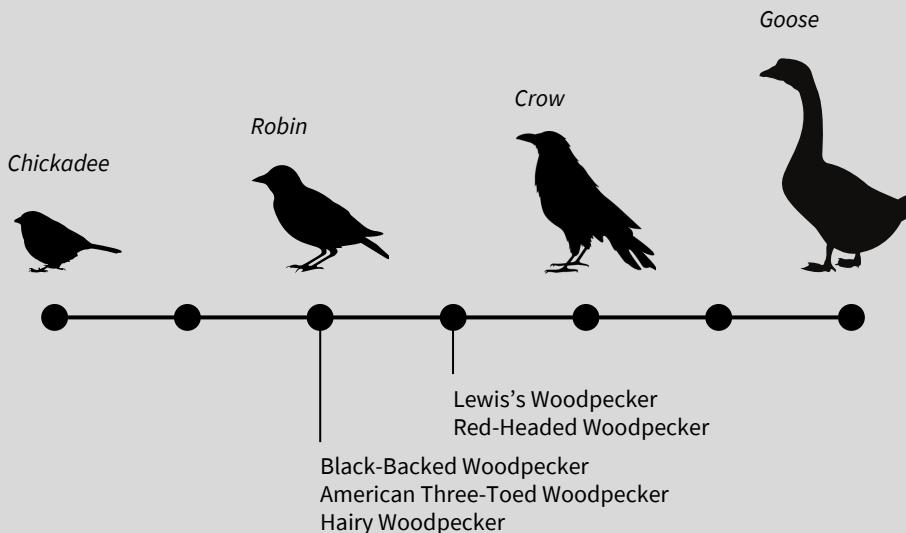
## American Three-Toed Woodpecker

A black-and-white woodpecker with (in males) a yellow patch on the forehead. The back is black with messy white barring and white spots in the wings. The underparts are white with fine blackish barring on the flanks. The face is black with a white line behind the eye and a thin white line below the cheek. The outer tail feathers are white, usually with a few black bars.

## Hairy Woodpecker

Hairy Woodpeckers are contrastingly black and white. The black wings are checkered with white; the head has two white stripes (and, in males, a flash of red toward the back of the head). A large white patch runs down the center of the black back.

# Relative Sizes





**Lewis's Woodpecker**  
Length: 10.2-11 in long  
Wingspan: 19.3-20.5 in



**Black-Backed Woodpecker**  
Length: 9.1 in long  
Wingspan: 15.8-16.5 in



**Red-Headed Woodpecker**  
Length: 7.5-9.8 in long  
Wingspan: 16.7 in



**American Three-Toed Woodpecker**  
Length: 8.3-9.1 in long  
Wingspan: 14.6-15.3 in



**Hairy Woodpecker**  
Length: 7.1-10.2 in long  
Wingspan: 13-17 in



# Color Patterns

## White-Crowned Sparrow

First impressions of White-crowned Sparrows tend to be of a plain, pale-gray bird; next your eye is drawn to the very bold black-and-white stripes on the head and the pale pink or yellow bill.

## Eastern Bluebird

Male Eastern Bluebirds are vivid, deep blue above and rusty or brick-red on the throat and breast. Blue in birds always depends on the light, and males often look plain gray-brown from a distance. Females are grayish above with bluish wings and tail, and a subdued orange-brown breast.

## Scarlet Tanager

In spring and summer, adult males are an unmistakable, brilliant red with black wings and tails. Females and fall immatures are olive-yellow with darker olive wings and tails. After breeding, adult males molt to female-like plumage, but with black wings and tail.

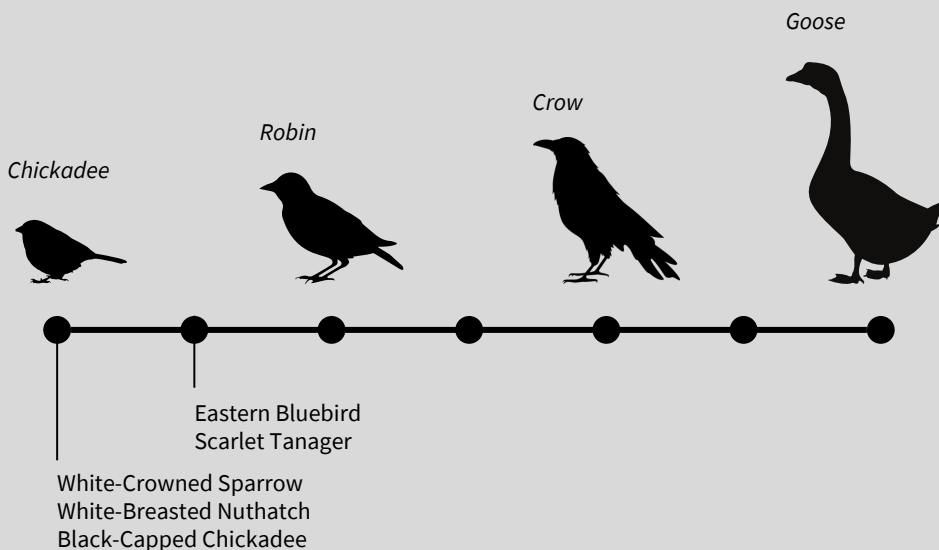
## White-Breasted Nuthatch

White-breasted Nuthatches are gray-blue on the back, with a frosty white face and underparts. The black or gray cap and neck frame the face and make it look like this bird is wearing a hood. The lower belly and under the tail are often chestnut.

## Black-Capped Chickadee

The cap and bib are black, the cheeks white, the back soft gray, the wing feathers gray edged with white, and the underparts soft buffy on the sides grading to white beneath. The cap extends down just beyond the black eyes, making the small eyes tricky to see.

# Relative Sizes





# SONG BIRDS (PASSERIFORMES)



**White-Crowned Sparrow**

Length: 5.9-6.3 in long  
Wingspan: 8.3-9.4 in



**Eastern Bluebird**

Length: 6.3-8.3 in long  
Wingspan: 9.8-12.6 in



**Scarlet Tanager**

Length: 6.3-7.5 in long  
Wingspan: 9.8-11.8 in



**White-Breasted Nuthatch**

Length: 5.1-5.5 in long  
Wingspan: 7.9-10.6 in



**Black-Capped Chickadee**

Length: 2.3-2.5 in long  
Wingspan: 2.5-2.6 in

# Color Patterns

## American Goldfinch

Adult males in spring and early summer are bright yellow with black forehead, black wings with white markings, and white patches both above and beneath the tail. Adult females are duller yellow beneath, olive above. Winter birds are drab, unstreaked brown, with blackish wings and two pale wingbars.

## Tufted Titmouse

Soft silvery gray above and white below, with a rusty or peach-colored wash down the flanks. A black patch just above the bill makes the bird look snub-nosed.

## Cedar Waxwing

Cedar Waxwings are pale brown on the head and chest fading to soft gray on the wings. The belly is pale yellow, and the tail is gray with a bright yellow tip. The face has a narrow black mask neatly outlined in white. The red waxy tips to the wing feathers are not always easy to see.

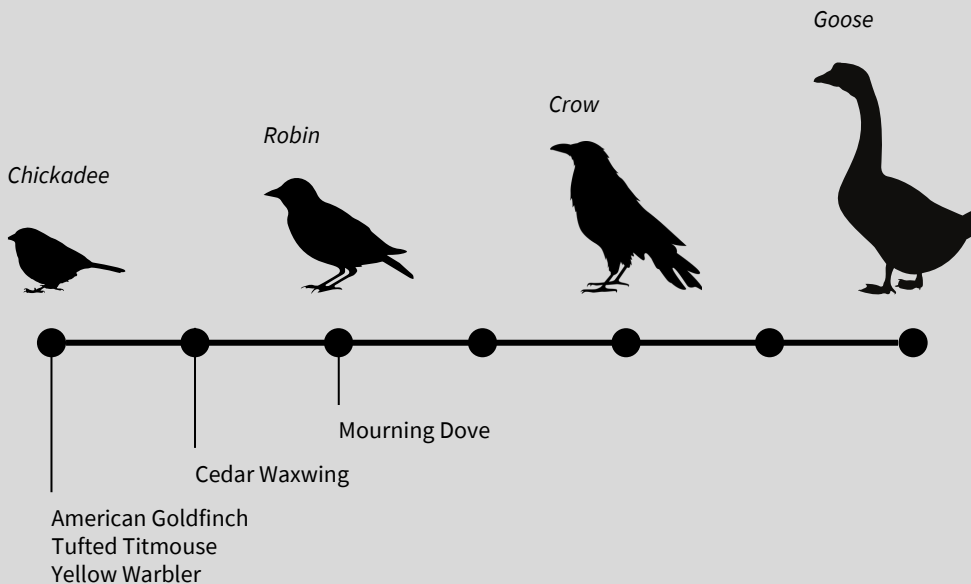
## Mourning Dove

Mourning Doves often match their open-country surroundings. They're delicate brown to buffy-tan overall, with black spots on the wings and black-bordered white tips to the tail feathers.

## Yellow Warbler

Yellow Warblers are uniformly yellow birds. Males are a bright, egg-yolk yellow with reddish streaks on the underparts. Both sexes flash yellow patches in the tail. The face is unmarked, accentuating the large black eye.

# Relative Sizes





**American Goldfinch**

Length: 4.3-5.5 in long  
Wingspan: 7.5-8.7 in



**Tufted Titmouse**

Length: 5.5-6.3 in long  
Wingspan: 7.9-10.2 in



**Cedar Waxwing**

Length: 6-7 in long  
Wingspan: 8.7-11.8 in



**Yellow Warbler**

Length: 3.9-7.1 in long  
Wingspan: 6.3-8.7 in



**Mourning Dove**

Length: 11-13 in long  
Wingspan: 17-19 in



# Color Patterns

## Great Horned Owl

Great Horned Owls are mottled gray-brown, with reddish brown faces and a neat white patch on the throat. Their overall color tone varies regionally from sooty to pale.

## Barred Owl

Barred Owls are mottled brown and white overall, with dark brown, almost black, eyes. The underparts are mostly marked with vertical brown bars on a white background, while the upper breast is crossed with horizontal brown bars. The wings and tail are barred brown and white.

## Great Gray Owl

Great Gray Owls are silvery gray overall—patterned with fine white, gray, and brown streaking and faint barring. Their yellow eyes shine through the fine gray-and-brown concentric circles of the facial disk. Two pale arcs form an “X” between the eyes. Across the neck sits a white “bow tie” marking with a black center. Their bill, if visible, is yellow. Males and females look similar.

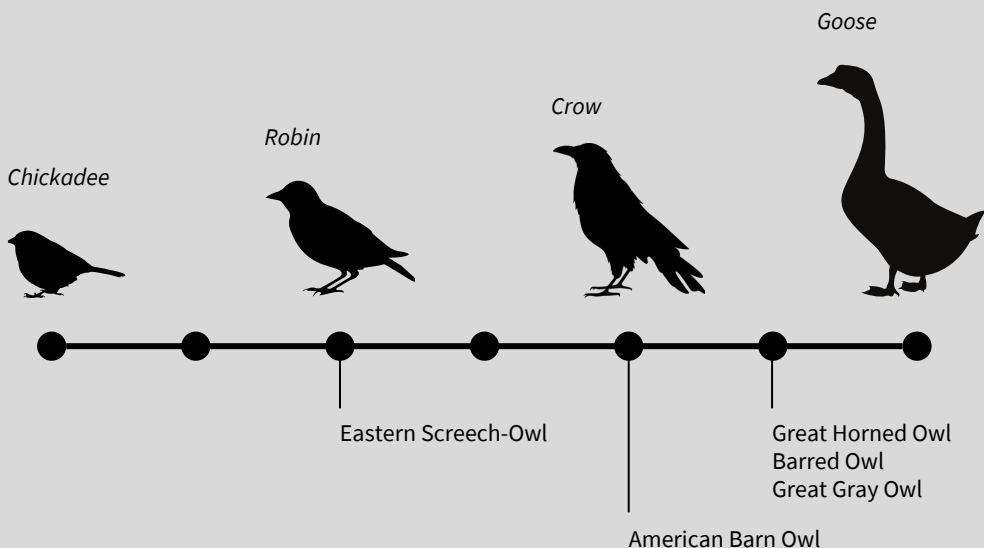
## American Barn Owl

American Barn Owls are pale overall with dark eyes. They have a mix of buff and gray on the head, back, and upperwings, and are white on the face, body, and underwings. When seen at night they can appear all white.

## Eastern Screech-Owl

Eastern Screech-Owls can be either mostly gray or mostly reddish-brown (rufous). Whatever the overall color, they are patterned with complex bands and spots that give the bird excellent camouflage against tree bark. Eyes are yellow.

# Relative Sizes





# OWLS (STRIGIFORMES)



**Great Horned Owl**  
Length: 17-25 in long  
Wingspan: 3-5 ft



**Great Gray Owl**  
Length: 24-33 in long  
Wingspan: 4.8-5 ft



**Barred Owl**  
Length: 16-25 in long  
Wingspan: 50-60 in



**Eastern Screech-Owl**  
Length: 6.5-10 in long  
Wingspan: 18-24 in



**American Barn Owl**  
Length: 12.6-15.8 in long  
Wingspan: 39.4-49.2 in

# Color Patterns

## Short-Eared Owl

Short-eared Owls are medium brown spotted with buff and white on the upperparts. The face is pale with yellow eyes accentuated by black outlines. The breast is heavily streaked with brown; the chest and belly are pale or buffy. The pale underwing has a dark comma-shaped mark near the wrist, and the upperwing shows a pale patch in the primaries.

## Northern Saw-whet Owl

Northern Saw-whet Owls are mottled brown birds with a whitish facial disk and white-spotted head. Their eyes are yellow. Juveniles are dark brown with creamy yellow breast and belly.

## Long-Eared Owl

Long-eared Owls are fairly dark birds with buff or orange faces and intricate black, brown, and buff patterning on its feathers. The ear tufts are black with buff or orange fringes, the face has two vertical white lines between the eyes, and the eyes are yellow.

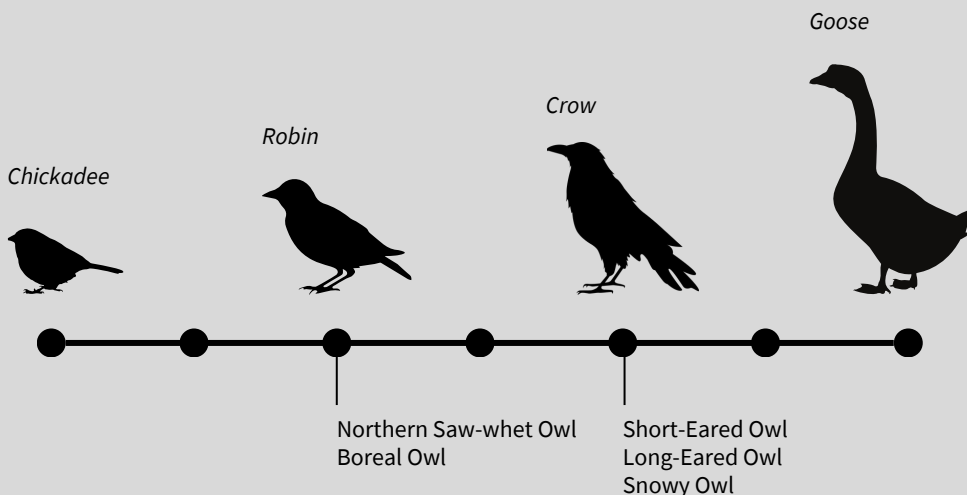
## Snowy Owl

Snowy Owls are white birds with varying amounts of black or brown markings on the body and wings. On females this can be quite dense, giving the bird a salt-and-pepper look. Males tend to be paler and become whiter as they age. The eyes are yellow.

## Boreal Owl

Brown overall with white spots on the back and brown streaks down the white belly. Yellow eyes peer out from a grayish white facial disc bordered in brown. Tiny white spots dot the crown.

# Relative Sizes



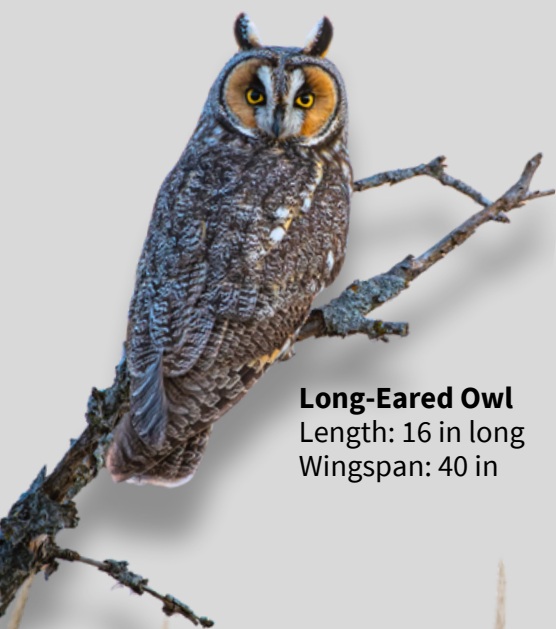




**Short-Eared Owl**  
Length: 13.4-16.9 in long  
Wingspan: 33.5-40.5 in



**Northern Saw-whet Owl**  
Length: 7-8.5 in long  
Wingspan: 16.5-22.2 in



**Long-Eared Owl**  
Length: 16 in long  
Wingspan: 40 in



**Snowy Owl**  
Length: 20.5-27.9 in long  
Wingspan: 49.6-57.1 in



**Boreal Owl**  
Length: 8-11 in long  
Wingspan: 21.6-24.4 in



# Color Patterns

## Crested Caracara

Crested Caracaras are black and white with yellow-orange legs and yellow-orange skin around the bill. Their black cap contrasts strongly with their white neck and cheeks. In flight the undertail and outer flight feathers are white. Juveniles are brown and white and lack the adult's yellow-orange legs and facial skin.

## Black-Tailed Gull

Adults are white with slaty-black upperwings and backs. They have dull pink legs, a yellow bill with a red spot near the tip, and darkish eyes. Juveniles are checkered gray-brown and white above; they have white-based, black-tipped tails, black bills, and blackish flight feathers.

## Marbled Godwit

Barred above and below in brown, white, and cinnamon during the breeding season. In flight, note the cinnamon underwings year-round. The bill is bicolored: black at the tip and orange at the base during breeding or pink during the nonbreeding season.

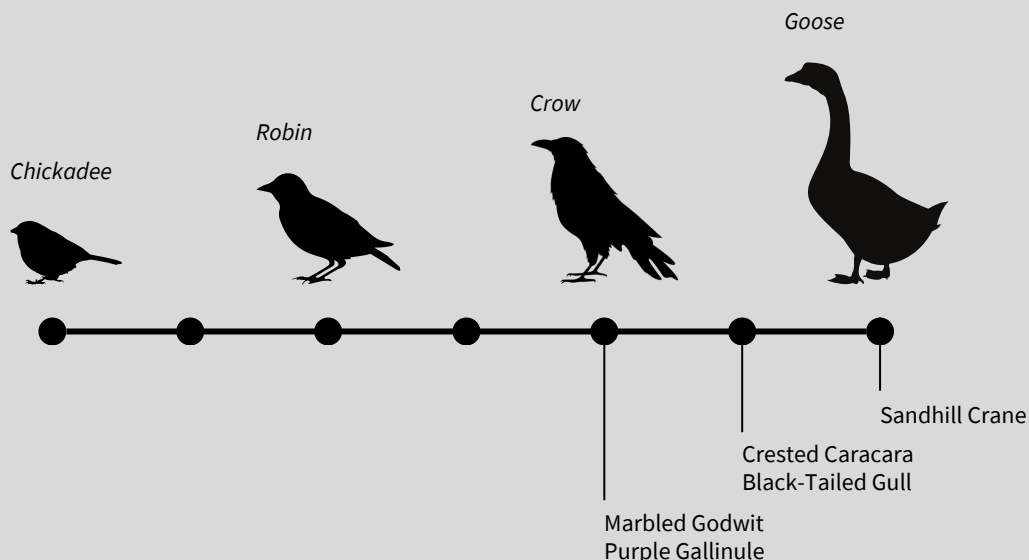
## Sandhill Crane

These are slate gray birds, often with a rusty wash on the upperparts. Adults have a pale cheek and red skin on the crown. Their legs are black. Juveniles are gray and rusty brown, without the pale cheek or red crown.

## Purple Gallinule

Adults are a medley of purplish head and body, greenish wings and back, a yellow-tipped red bill, baby-blue frontal shield, and bright yellow legs and feet. Juveniles show very little hint of these colors, being mostly brown above, khaki below, with much duller bill and legs. Immatures acquire their colors gradually in their first year.

# Relative Sizes





# RARE BIRDS OF VERMONT



**Crested Caracara**

Length: 19.7-25.2 in long  
Wingspan: 48-52 in



**Black-Tailed Gull**

Length: 19 in long  
Wingspan: 49.6-50.3 in



**Marbled Godwit**

Length: 16-20 in long  
Wingspan: 28-35 in



**Sandhill Crane**

Length: 3.2-3.9 ft long  
Wingspan: 5.9-6.5 ft



**Purple Gallinule**

Length: 10-15 in long  
Wingspan: 20-24 in



# Color Patterns

## Gadwall

Male Gadwall are gray-brown with a black patch at the tail. Females are patterned with brown and buff. Females have a thin orange edge to their dark bills. In flight, both sexes have a white wing patch that is sometimes visible while swimming or resting.

## Ruddy Shelduck

The Ruddy Shelduck is a large duck with overall orange-brown plumage that fades to a creamy white on its head and rump. Its wings exhibit a distinctive contrast between the black flight feathers and white coverts.

## Ash-Throated Flycatcher

Ash-throated Flycatchers are grayish brown overall with a pale yellow belly and cinnamon edges on the primary feathers in the wing. The underside of the tail has a broad stroke of cinnamon down the center bordered by brownish gray. The cinnamon stripe does not reach the tip of the tail; the tip of the tail is brownish gray. Two whitish wingbars mark the wings. The head and face is uniformly ashy gray with a whitish throat. Males and females look similar.

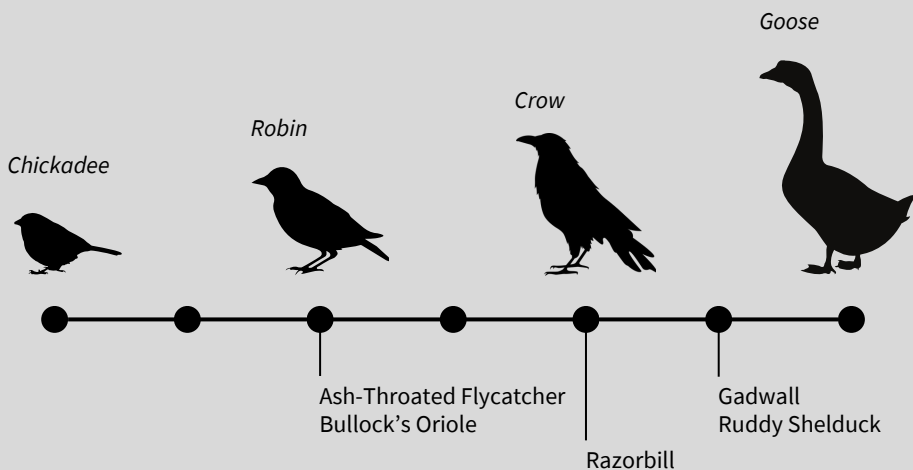
## Razorbill

Adult in breeding plumage is jet black above and white below, with a black bill with transverse white band. The interior of the mouth is vivid yellow. Nonbreeding adults have the throat and side of the face white rather than black.

## Bullock's Oriole

Adult males are bright orange with a black back and large white wing patch. The face is orange with a black line through the eye and a black throat. Females and immatures are yellowish-orange on the head and tail, with grayish back and white-edged wing coverts. Immature males show a black throat patch.

# Relative Sizes





**Gadwall**

Length: 18-23 in long  
Wingspan: 33 in

**Ruddy Shelduck**

Length: 23-28 in long  
Wingspan: 43-53 in



**Ash-Throated Flycatcher**

Length: 7.5-8.6 in long  
Wingspan: 11.8-12.6 in



**Razorbill**

Length: 16.9 in long  
Wingspan: 24.8-26.8 in



**Bullock's Oriole**

Length: 6.7-7.5 in long  
Wingspan: 12.2 in



# WHERE TO BIRD WATCH

Here are the trails we have on property and the different recreation opportunities you can utilize for viewing the different species found in this guide!



**Button Bay Trail**

**Edgewater Trail**

**Nature Trail**

**Wilderness Bike Trail**

**Woodlands Trail**

**Lodge Lawn**

**Sunshine Lawn**

**Gatehouse Field**

**The Airstrip**



To locate trails, stop at the Concierge or Front Desk for a property map!





### **Snake Mountain Hike**

Off Campus trip to a 4 mile round-trip hike to the summit. Spectacular, sweeping views of the Champlain Valley from the summit. This is an easy to moderate hike.

### **Guided Adirondack Mountain Hike**

Let us guide you through the largest park in the United States, the Adirondack State Park of Northern New York. Start your tour with a short, beautiful boat ride across Lake Champlain into a cove tucked in the Adirondack cliffs. The hike will take you through the pristine coniferous and mixed hardwood forests where you will encounter a variety of songbirds, predatory birds, and woodland mammals. You will learn about trees, geology, and the formation of these rugged mountains. This is a strenuous hike, please be equipped with proper hiking shoes.

### **Mount Philo Hike**

Embark on an off-property excursion to Mt. Philo, a picturesque 3-mile round-trip hike. Revel in the breathtaking panoramic views of the Champlain Valley awaiting you at the summit.

### **Button Bay Stroll**

Join in this leisurely 2 mile stroll along the Button Bay trail, out to the point and back along the golf course. We'll take a gander at some trees, chat about rock formations and fossils, learn some history tidbits about Button Island and hopefully catch sight of some wildlife along the way. Hiking shoes recommended as parts of the trail can be a bit muddy.





Basin Harbor

**PROPERTY OF BASIN HARBOR.**  
Please return to the Front Desk after  
your birding adventures.